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Contents

Chapter	Topic	page
	Introduction	9
1	His Lineage: The Best of the Best	21
2	His Upbringing	27
3	His Physical Description, and a Description of His (ﷺ)	
	Morals	43
4	His Worship	57
5	The Noble Prophet ﷺ – a Mercy to Mankind	71
	First: How His ﷺ Mercy, as a General Phenomenon, Embraces all Beings— Humans, Jinns, Believers, Disbelievers, and even Animals	71
	Second: Categories of His Mercy, And its' Practical Implementation	74
	Mercy Towards Enemies	74
	His Mercy Towards Believers	81
	His Mercy Towards All Human Beings	84
	His Mercy Towards Children	86
	His Mercy Towards Daughters and Young Girls in General	86
	His Mercy Towards Orphans	87
	His Mercy Towards Women and The Weak	88
	His Mercy Towards Widows and The Poor	89
	His Mercy Towards Students of Knowledge	91
	His Mercy Towards Prisoners	92
	His Mercy Towards The Sick	92

	His Mercy Towards Animals	94
6	His Kindness Towards Children.....	111
7	His Good Manners	121
	First: How He ﷺ Encouraged Others to Develop Good Manners	121
	Second: The Prophet's Good Manners.....	136
8	His ﷺ Generosity	137
	Two things helped convince the woman that she should embrace Islam.....	143
9	The Prophet's Justice	145
10	His Humbleness	159
11	A Forgiving and Forbearing Leader	167
12	His ﷺ Carefulness and Deliberateness.....	193
13	His Gentleness and Softness.....	199
	First: How He ﷺ Would Encourage Muslims to be Gentle....	199
	Second: The Prophet's ﷺ Gentleness.....	203
14	His Patience	217
15	His ﷺ Bravery	253
16	His Wisdom, and His ﷺ Ability to Unite People and Make Peace between Them	267
	1) Building His Masjid.....	268
	2) Inviting the Jews of Al-Madînah to Islam.....	269
	3) Establishing Ties of Brotherhood Between the <i>Muhâjir</i> oon (Muslims Who Migrated to Al-Madînah) and the Ansâr (The Native Inhabitants of Al-Madînah).....	272
	4) Providing Muslims with Proper Training and Guidance.....	274
	5) The New Constitution of Al-Madînah	282
17	The Prophet's ﷺ Eloquence	283
18	His ﷺ Miracles	287
	First: The Miracles of the Noble Qur'ân.....	288
	1) The Qur'ân's Eloquence.....	291

	2) Information About the Unseen World	294
	3) The Miraculous Nature of the Qur'ân's Laws and Legislations	295
	4) Modern-Day Knowledge	297
	Part Two: Physical or Tangible Miracles of the Prophet ﷺ.....	298
	First: Miracles that Had to do with Outer Space.....	298
	Second: Miracles in the Sky	300
	Third: Miracles Pertaining to Human Beings, Animals, Jinns .	301
	Fourth: Miracles Pertaining to Trees, Fruits, and Wood	303
	Fifth: Miracles that Pertain to Mountains, Rocks, and Dirt.....	304
	Sixth: Miracles that Pertain to Water, Food, Drink, and Fruits	306
	Seventh: Help From Angels.....	308
	Eighth: How Allâh ﷻ Guaranteed to Protect the Prophet ﷺ.....	310
	Ninth: His Supplications Were Answered	313
19	The Universality of the Prophet's ﷺ Message	315
20	Some Just and Honest Jewish and Christian Scholars Acknowledge the Truthfulness of the Prophet's Message.....	323
	Zaid ibn Sa'nah ؓ.....	327
	Two Young Jewish Men Embrace Islam While Lying on their Deathbeds.....	329
	Second: Christian Scholars Who Acknowledged the Truthfulness.....	330
	Salmân Al-Fârîsee ؓ	332
	Hiraql, the Emperor of Rome.....	334
21	His (ﷺ) Best Deeds Were His (ﷺ) Final Deeds	337
22	His (ﷺ) Farewell to His (ﷺ) Nation	343
	1) He ﷺ Announces His Intention to Perform Hajj.....	343
	2) His (ﷺ) Farewell Advice to Muslims in Arafât	344
	3) His (ﷺ) Speech at Al-Jamarât.....	348

	4) His (ﷺ) Farewell Advice on the Day of An-Nahr.....	349
	5) His (ﷺ) Farewell Advice in the Middle of the Days of At-Tashrîq.....	351
23	The Prophet's (ﷺ) Farewell to Both the Living and the Dead...	359
24	The Early Days of the Prophet's (ﷺ) Illness.....	363
25	A Sermon of Paramount Importance	373
26	His (ﷺ) Illness Takes a Turn for the Worse, and Some of the Things He (ﷺ) Said During the Difficult Days that Followed	377
27	Advice the Prophet ﷺ Gave Just Prior to His Death	385
28	When Given the Choice Between this World and the Hereafter, the Prophet ﷺ Chose the Latter	393
29	The Prophet ﷺ Died a Martyr	399
30	"Whoever Worships Allâh, then Allâh is Alive and does not Die	403
31	The Calamity of the Prophet's ﷺ Death	415
32	The Prophet's ﷺ Inheritance	419
33	His ﷺ Rights Over the People of His ﷺ Nation.....	423
	1) We Must Believe in Everything He ﷺ Came With.....	424
	2) We Must Obey Him.....	426
	3) We Must Follow Him.....	428
	5) Honoring the Prophet ﷺ	434
	6) We Must Support the Prophet's Cause (i.e., the Cause of Islam); also, the Islamic Ruling Regarding One Who Curses the Prophet ﷺ.....	435
	7) We Must Turn to Him for Judgment in Our Disputes	442
	8) We Must Respect the Prophet ﷺ, without Exaggerating His Qualities and without Giving Him Anything Less than the Respect He ﷺ Deserves.....	443
	9) We Must Send Salât Upon the Prophet ﷺ; or in Other Words, We Must ask Allâh ﷻ to Bless Him.....	445



Introduction

Indeed, all praise is for Allâh; we praise Him, repent to Him, and seek His forgiveness and help. We seek refuge in Allâh from the evil of our own selves and of our wicked deeds. Whomsoever Allâh guides, none can lead astray; and whomsoever Allâh leads astray, none can guide. And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allâh alone, and He has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

Allâh ﷻ has sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a mercy not just to mankind, but to the world of jinns as well. Allâh ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

"And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns and all that exists)." (Qur'ân 21:107)

Mercy is clemency and forbearance; mercy is the disposition to forgive or show compassion; mercy means a favor or a blessing; mercy further denotes the qualities of kindness, sympathy, generosity, and beneficence. Suffice is to say all of these qualities were present in abundance in the character of the Prophet ﷺ.

He ﷺ was a mercy not just to believers, but to disbelievers as well, for he would invite them to come out of darkness and into the light of true guidance. Allâh ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَتَايَهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ
الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ، وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allâh and His Words [(this Qur’ân), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injîl (Gospel) and also Allâh’s Word: “Be!” – and he was, i.e. ‘Iesa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary)], and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Qur’ân 7:158)

And in another verse, Allâh ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ﴾

“And (remember) when We sent towards you (Muhammad ﷺ) Nafran (three to ten persons) of the jinns, (quietly) listening to the Qur’ân, when they stood in the presence thereof, they said: “Listen in silence!” And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners.” (Qur’ân 46:29)

That Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a favor and blessing for mankind is clearly stated in this Verse:

﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي
ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

“Indeed Allâh conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Qur’ân), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur’ân) and Al-Hikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship, etc.)], while before that they had been in manifest error.” (Qur’ân 3:164)

The Prophet ﷺ was a favor and blessing not just for Arabs, the people among whom he was sent, but for people of all races and colors. In a speech he gave during his Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet ﷺ said,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ
لِعَرَبِيٍّ عَلَىٰ أَعْجَمِيٍّ وَلَا لِعَجَمِيٍّ عَلَىٰ عَرَبِيٍّ، وَلَا لِأَحْمَرَ عَلَىٰ
أَسْوَدَ، وَلَا لِأَسْوَدَ عَلَىٰ أَحْمَرَ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَىٰ»

“O people, your Lord is One, and your father is one (i.e., Adam). Lo! An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab, a non-Arab is not superior to an Arab, a red-skinned person is not superior to a black-skinned person, and a black-skinned person is not superior to a red-skinned person – except through At-Taqla (piety, righteousness, fear of Allâh).”^[1]

While today’s non-Muslims acknowledge that Islam spread with lightning-like speed throughout the Arabian Peninsula – and beyond – many among them refuse to honestly investigate the reasons why. Prejudiced beyond reason – through their

^[1] Musnad Ahmad with the numbering of Al-Bannâ (12/226). Commenting on the level of authenticity of this narration, Al-Haithamî wrote in *Mujma’ Az-Zawâid* (3/266), “Ahmad related it, and all of the men in its chain (i.e., all of the narrators) are men of *As-Sahîh* (i.e., are men who were so trustworthy that their narrations were related in *As-Sahîh* – *Sahîh Bukhârî* or *Sahîh Muslim*).

Chapter 1

His Lineage: The Best of the Best

The Prophet's lineage is clearly documented in books of history; every one of his fathers is known all the way back until 'Adnân. And even though historians disagree about the names of 'Adnân's forefathers, they agree that 'Adnân — and by extension the Prophet ﷺ — was a direct descendant of the Prophet Ibrâhîm ؑ. In *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah*, Ibn Kathîr (May Allâh have mercy on him) describes the Prophet's lineage all the way back until Adam ؑ; in *Zâd Al-Ma'âd*, however, Ibn Al-Qayyim (May Allâh have mercy on him) pointed out that scholars of genealogy agree about the names of the Prophet's forefathers up until 'Adnân, who was a direct descendant of Ibrâhîm ؑ, but they disagree about how many of 'Adnân's forefathers separated him from Ibrâhîm ؑ.^[1] Keeping in mind that the word "ibn"

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah*, by Ibn Kathîr (2/195); and to *Seerah Ibn Hishâm* (1/1). Having enumerated all of the Prophet's forefathers until Adnân, Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote in *Zâd Al-Ma'âd* (1/71), "Until here the Prophet's lineage is known for certain, and is a point of agreement among genealogists. Who comes after 'Adnân is a point of disagreement among scholars, who, however,

means “son of,” here then is the Prophet’s full name and lineage: Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ibn Hâshim ibn ‘Abd-Manâf ibn Qusai ibn Kilâb ibn Murrah ibn Ka’ab ibn Luaiy ibn Ghâlib ibn Faihr ibn Mâlik ibn An-Nadr ibn Kinânah ibn Khuzaimah ibn Mudrikah ibn Ilyâs ibn Mudar ibn Nizâr ibn Mu’idd ibn ‘Adnân.^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ was the best from the best, as is made clear in this *Hadîth*:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى كِنَانَةَ، مِنْ وَلَدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، وَاصْطَفَى قُرَيْشًا مِنْ

كِنَانَةَ، وَاصْطَفَى مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ، وَاصْطَفَانِي مِنْ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ»

“Verily, Allâh chose Kinânah from the children of Ismâ’îl; He chose Quraish from Kinânah; from Quraish He chose the children of Hâshim; and from the children of Hâshim He chose me.”^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ was born during the “Year of the Elephant,” or the year during which Abraha led an army towards Makkah with the intention of bringing down the Ka’bah.^[3] More precisely, he ﷺ was born on a Monday, in the month of Rabî’ul Awwal,^[4] in the

do agree that ‘Adnân is from the children of Ismâ’îl ﷺ. And Ismâ’îl ﷺ — at least according to the correct view that is held by scholars from the Companions, the Tâbi’oon (the generation that followed the generation of the Companions), and those that came afterwards — is “The Slaughtered One (i.e., the one that Ibrâhîm ﷺ, during a dream, was commanded to slaughter).”

^[1] *Al-Bukhârî* (along with Ibn Hajar’s famous commentary, *Al-Fath*), the Book of the Ansâr’s Virtues; chapter, “The Sending of the Prophet ﷺ,” before *Hadîth* number: 3851.

^[2] *Muslim* (2276).

^[3] Abraha of course failed in the attempt; the point here is that, because of the significance of his failed attempt, and because his army was accompanied by elephants. The year during which he tried to destroy the Ka’bah became famously known as the “Year of the Elephant.”

^[4] It is widely and correctly accepted among scholars that the Prophet ﷺ was born during the “Year of the Elephant,” in the month of Rabî’ul Awwal; in fact, some scholars went as far as saying that there is a consensus on those two points among the people of knowledge. Refer to *Tahdhîb As-Seerah*, by Imam An-Nawawî (pg. 20).

year 571 CE. It is an established fact; in an authentic *Hadîth*, the Prophet ﷺ, while responding to a question about why he ﷺ fasted on Mondays, said, “It was on this [day] that I was born, and it was on this [day] that revelation came down to me.”^[1] The exact date of the Prophet’s birth, on the other hand, is not known for certain; scholars have put forth a number of views: some say he was born on the 2nd of Rabî’ul Awwal; others, that he was born 8 days after the beginning of the month; others still, that he was born after the passing of seventeen days; and yet others, that he was born on the 12th of the month. Two of these views stand out as being not only the most widely-held, but also the most likely to be correct. The first is that the Prophet ﷺ was born after eight days expired from the month of Rabî’ul Awwal; this view was defended by Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr,^[2] who said that it was the more clearly established [view] by way of authentic accounts. The second is that he was born on the 12th of Rabî’ul Awwal; regarding this view, Ibn Kathîr said, “This is the opinion that is held by the majority of scholars.”^[3] In his famous biography of the Prophet ﷺ, Ibn Ishâq stated with certainty that this latter view is correct.^[4]

The Prophet ﷺ died at the age of 63. Forty of those years took place prior to his prophethood, and the remaining 23 years he spent as a Prophet and Messenger. He ﷺ became a Prophet with the revelation of *Iqra* (i.e., chapter “*Al-‘Alaq*” of the Qur’ân), and then he was officially made a Messenger with the revelation of chapter “*Al-Muddaththir*.” His hometown was Makkah, but then later, because of how he was persecuted by his fellow tribesmen, he ﷺ was forced to migrate to Al-Madînah.

Allâh ﷻ sent the Prophet ﷺ with a mission that had two primary — and complementary — goals: The first was to warn people not to associate partners with Allâh ﷻ in worship, and the second was to

^[1] *Muslim* (2/820).

^[2] Refer to *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah* (2/260).

^[3] Refer to *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah* (2/260).

^[4] *Seerah Ibn Hishâm* (1/171).

According to the narration of Imam Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ»

“Whoever does an act [pertaining to matters of worship] that is not from our affair (i.e. that is not from the established teachings of the Qur’ân and Sunnah), then he (and his act of innovation) is rejected.”^[1]

- 3) As can be appreciated from the focus of the first thirteen years of his mission, the primary duties of the Prophet ﷺ were to invite people to embrace Islamic Monotheism (Tawhîd), to save them from the evil of polytheism, to bring them from the darkness of sins to the light of good deeds, and to steer them away from ignorance and towards knowledge. In short, anything that is good and noble, he has ordered us to follow and embrace; and anything that is evil and wicked, he has commanded us to avoid and shun. May the peace and blessings of Allâh ﷻ be upon him.



^[1] Refer to *Risâlah At-Tahdhîr Minal-Bid’ah*, by our noble and esteemed Shaikh, ‘Abdul-‘Azîz ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Bâz (May Allah have mercy on him).

Chapter 2

His Upbringing

Both of his parents having died by the time he was only six years old, the Prophet ﷺ grew up as an orphan. As difficult as the life of an orphan usually is, Allâh ﷻ blessed the Prophet ﷺ, providing him with refuge, the love and care of his uncle, and all of his basic material needs.

His father, ‘Abdullah, died while he was still in his mother’s womb. After he was born, he was nursed for a number of days by *Thurwaibah*,^[1] who was a servant of Abu Lahab. Then the Prophet ﷺ was sent away to be cared for in the pure atmosphere of the desert, and there he was nursed by Halîmah As-Sa’diyyah. The Prophet ﷺ remained under the care of Halîmah, and in the company of the Banu Sa’ad tribe, for approximately four years. It was during his stay with Halîmah that he underwent the first major step towards becoming a Prophet ﷺ. It was a preparatory and highly symbolic step, one that involved the literal washing of

^[1] *Al-Bukhârî* (along with Ibn Hajr’s famous commentary, *Al-Fath*) (9/124).

his heart; and it was a miraculous occurrence that took place in the presence of a group of children from the Banu Sa'ad tribe. In a narration that is related in *Sahîh Muslim*, Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ said, "While the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was playing with some other boys, Jibrîl ؑ came to him, took him, forced him to the ground, and split him open, revealing his heart. Jibrîl extracted his heart, removed from it a blood clot, and said, 'This is the portion of *Shaitân* (the Devil) in you.' He then washed the heart with *Zamzam* water in a basin made of gold. He then joined the heart together, and returned it to its place. The children hurried off to his mother — i.e. nursing suckling mother. They said to her, 'Verily, Muhammad has been killed.' They went to him and found that his color had changed (though he was otherwise fine)." Anas ؓ said, "I used to see the marks of that stitching on his chest."^[1]

Halîmah loved the Prophet ﷺ a great deal; her life changed completely after she took it upon herself to nurse him, for Allâh ﷻ then blessed her with more than sufficient sustenance. Keeping the Prophet ﷺ was in Halîmah's best self-interest, she loved him too much to think selfishly about her own comfort and material well-being. After the above-mentioned incident took place, she became afraid for the Prophet ﷺ, and felt that it was no longer safe for him to stay with her. And so she decided to return the Prophet ﷺ to his mother, Âminah bint Wahb.

Later on, Âminah took the Prophet ﷺ with her to Al-Madînah, where she was going in order to visit her brothers. During their return journey to Makkah, at a place called Al-Abwâ, Âminah died. At the time, the Prophet ﷺ was 6 years, 3 months, and 10 days old.^[2]

^[1] *Muslim* (261) (162). Also, refer to Ibn Kathîr's *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah*, to the edition that contains the commentary of Dr. 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin At-Turkî (3/413).

^[2] *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah* (4/423); *Al-Fusool Fee Seeratir-Rasool* ﷺ, by Ibn Kathîr (pg. 92). Both of the Prophet's parents died while being upon the polytheist faith of the Quraish — refer to *Sahîh Muslim* (203).

Even though the Prophet ﷺ was an orphan, he never lacked the love and care that every child needs. Whenever he would lose one loving caregiver, Allâh ﷻ would replace that caregiver with another who loved him just as much. With the death of his mother, he ﷺ was taken and cared for by his grandfather, the eminent chieftain, 'Abdul-Muttalib. For the next two years of his life, the Prophet ﷺ enjoyed the healthy and loving atmosphere of his grandfather's home. 'Abdul-Muttalib saw in the Prophet ﷺ signs of greatness, and he took special care of him; for instance, he allowed the Prophet ﷺ, instead of his many sons, to sit beside him on his mat in front of the Ka'bah. Then, with his death imminent, 'Abdul-Muttalib ordered that his grandson be placed in the custody of his uncle Abu Tâlib. The Prophet ﷺ, who was eight years old at the time, could not have been placed under the care of a better guardian — a guardian that cared for and protected him not just as a child, and not just as a young adult, but also during the difficult early years of his prophethood.

'Abu Tâlib loved the Prophet ﷺ deeply, so much, in fact, that despite remaining a polytheist, he supported the Prophet ﷺ during the most difficult years of his prophethood — the years during which he faced constant persecution at the hands of the Quraish. Abu Tâlib was motivated by avuncular love, and not by faith in his nephew's mission; that being said, he did know deep down in his heart that his nephew was preaching the truth. But even his love for the Prophet ﷺ and his inner convictions were not enough to counteract his overriding loyalty to the ways, customs, and beliefs of his forefathers. As such, despite being a staunch supporter of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Tâlib died a polytheist.

Because of the ultimate justice of Allâh ﷻ, not all polytheists are the same. Some will suffer more than others in the Hellfire; some will be in the Hellfire's lowest depths, while others will be in a shallower, but still horrible, part of the Hellfire. The Prophet's intercession will decrease, but not cancel out completely, Abu Tâlib's punishment in the Hellfire. The Prophet ﷺ said:

«خُذُوا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا تُطِيقُونَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَمَلُّ حَتَّى تَمَلُّوا»

“Take from good deeds those that you are able to perform, for indeed, Allâh ﷻ does not become bored until you become bored.”^[1]

(To become weary and bored are qualities that are impossible for Allâh ﷻ, given His complete perfection; the Prophet ﷺ used this wording in a figurative sense; the *Hadîth* therefore means: ‘Allâh cuts off a person’s rewards when that person gets bored of doing good deeds.’ So here, in a figurative sense, the Prophet ﷺ replaced the words ‘Allâh cuts off a person’s rewards’ with the word ‘bored.’ And Allâh ﷻ knows best.)

In another *Hadîth*, the Prophet ﷺ said,

«مَا نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ، وَمَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ فَاتُّوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ»

“Stay away from all that I have commanded you not to do. As for the things I have ordered you to do, do what you are able to perform.”^[2]

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^[1] Refer to *Tahdhîb As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, by Imam An-Nawawî (pg. 56); to *Mukhtasar As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*, by Al-Hâfidh ‘Abdul-Ghanî Al-Maqdasî (pg. 77); to *Huqooq Al-Mustafâ*, by Qâdî ‘Iyâdh (1/77-215); and *Mukhtasar Ash-Shamâil Al-Muhammadiyah*, by At-Tirmidhî (pgs. 112-188).

^[2] *Bukharî* (7288) and *Muslim* (2619).

Chapter 4

His Worship

- 1) To be sure, the Prophet ﷺ was an ideal leader and example after which all Muslims should pattern their lives. Allâh ﷻ said:

«لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا»

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allâh and the Last Day and remembers Allâh much.” (Qur’ân 33:21)

A person who wants to be a good example for others must translate his words into actions; one cannot, for instance, preach generosity while being a miser. That is why the Prophet ﷺ was such an ideal example: In all aspects of his life, he ﷺ was a role model through his actions and deeds. This principle applied to

"What do I have to do with this world? The example of me and this world is nothing more than the example of a rider who traveled on a hot day, who sought shade underneath a tree for an hour, and who then got up and left it (the tree)."^[1]

The Lessons and Morals of This Section

- 1) Prophets ﷺ came not to gather wealth or gain power, but to guide people to the Truth - to take them out of darkness and to bring them into the light.
- 2) Although the Prophet ﷺ could have had as much wealth as he wanted, he ﷺ took from this world nothing more than his basic needs.
- 3) The Prophet ﷺ did not depend on other human beings for help, which is why, rather than go to his Companions ﷺ for help, he ﷺ took out a loan from a Jewish man and gave him his armor as collateral.
- 4) The Prophet ﷺ endured many hardships, such as when, for two months straight, he ﷺ and his family ﷺ survived on dates and water, since they had nothing to cook.

O Allâh, send prayers and salutations on Muhammad as long as night follows day, and day follows night. And I ask Allâh, the Most-High, the All-Mighty, to make us from among the Prophet's sincere followers, and to make us join his company in the Hereafter.

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^[1] *Musnad Ahmad* (6/154). In *Al-Bidâyah Wan-Nihâyah* (5/284), Ibn Kathîr wrote, "Its chain is good." *At-Tirmidhî* (1377) and *Ibn Mâjah* (4109) related it as well. Refer also to *Al-Ahâdîth As-Sahîhah* (439) and *Sahîh At-Tirmidhî* (2/280).

Chapter 33

His ﷺ Rights Over the People of His ﷺ Nation

As Muslims, it is our duty to know about the numerous rights the Prophet ﷺ has over us. He came to this world in order to do his best to save all of us from the Hellfire. Day and night, he ﷺ invited people to embrace the truth; with every breath he took, he ﷺ tried to further the cause of Islam; and in all of his dealings with Muslims, he ﷺ showed mercy to them, always doing what was in their best interests. Since he ﷺ fulfilled the rights Muslims have over him, it only makes sense that we as Muslims must strive to fulfill the rights he has over us.

Among the rights he ﷺ has over us are the following: We must believe in everything he ﷺ came with; we must obey him; we must not only turn to him in our disputes, we must also accept and be pleased with his final judgment; we must give him his due respect, without exaggerating his qualities and without giving him anything less than the respect he ﷺ deserves; we must follow him, by taking him as an ideal role model in all of our affairs; we must support his Religion and defend his *Sunnah*; and we must send Prayers upon him. The Prophet ﷺ said,